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Artists-

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Artists of Abraham Lincoln portraits

Paul Philippoteaux

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

The Gettysburg Cyclorama



The High Water Mark

A "cyclorama" was a very popular form of entertainment in the late 1800's, both in America and Europe. These massive oil-on-canvas paintings were mounted in special auditoriums and were enhanced with landscaped foregrounds and life-size figures. The result was a scene that surrounded the viewer, giving it a three-dimensional effect, placing the spectator in the center of the action. Most depicted historic events including battle scenes, religious themes or scenes from great works of literature. Hundreds were painted and exhibited in Europe and America during the 1800's, yet most were lost or destroyed as their popularity died out with the introduction of a more entertaining art form- the movies.

The Gettysburg Cyclorama is one that has survived. This circular canvas painting portrays the fury of the final Confederate assault on July 3, 1863, commonly referred to as "Pickett's Charge". The culmination of the battle was captured on canvas by the French artist Paul Philippoteaux, a professional cyclorama painter and artist. Philippoteaux was not present at the height of the battle and was not able to come to Gettysburg until 1879. At that time he had been contracted by several entrepreneurs to paint this monumental work for a special display in Chicago. Knowing very little about the battle and the events of July 3, 1863, Philippoteaux arrived in Gettysburg in 1879 armed only with a sketchbook, pencils, pens, and a simple guide book to help him locate the site. The artist spent several weeks on the battlefield, visiting and making sketches. He also interviewed numerous participants and contacted a local photographer to make a panoramic photographic record of the area for use as a background for the painting. These are some of the earliest detailed photographic images of Cemetery Ridge, the Angle and "High Water Mark", and the field of Pickett's Charge. Armed with a huge amount of information, Philippoteaux returned to his studio where he immediately set about laying out the great work. A team of assistants helped him sketch out every detail including soldiers, trees, and stone walls, and then set about applying tons of oil paint. The phenomenal work took almost two years to complete.

The "Cyclorama of the Battle of Gettysburg" opened to the public in Chicago in 1882, complete with a three-dimensional earthen foreground littered with the relics of battle, stone walls, shattered trees and broken fences. Visitors were awed by the painting's spectacular realism. Even veterans of the battle such as General John Gibbon, wrote of its splendor. It received such public acclaim that Philippoteaux was contracted to paint a second version of his monumental work, which opened in Boston two years later. This Boston version was brought to Gettysburg by a local entrepreneur for the 1913 Anniversary celebration of the battle and has remained here since.

Purchased by the National Park Service in the 1950's, the painting was moved to its present home in 1962. The artistic work underwent a massive restoration that required hours of hand labor to restore water damaged sections of the painting. The project was completed and re-opened for public viewing with the dedication of the National Park Service Visitor Center, which is the Cyclorama Center today. The Gettysburg Cyclorama is 360 feet long, 26 feet high and weighs an estimated 3 tons.

The fate of the other Gettysburg Cycloramas has been less fortunate. The Chicago painting was eventually sold and is in private ownership today, though in desperate need of a home and restoration. Two more versions of the Gettysburg Cyclorama were painted and exhibited, but neither survive. One was cut into sections for use as tents on a Shoshone Indian Reservation after the turn of the century. The fate of the

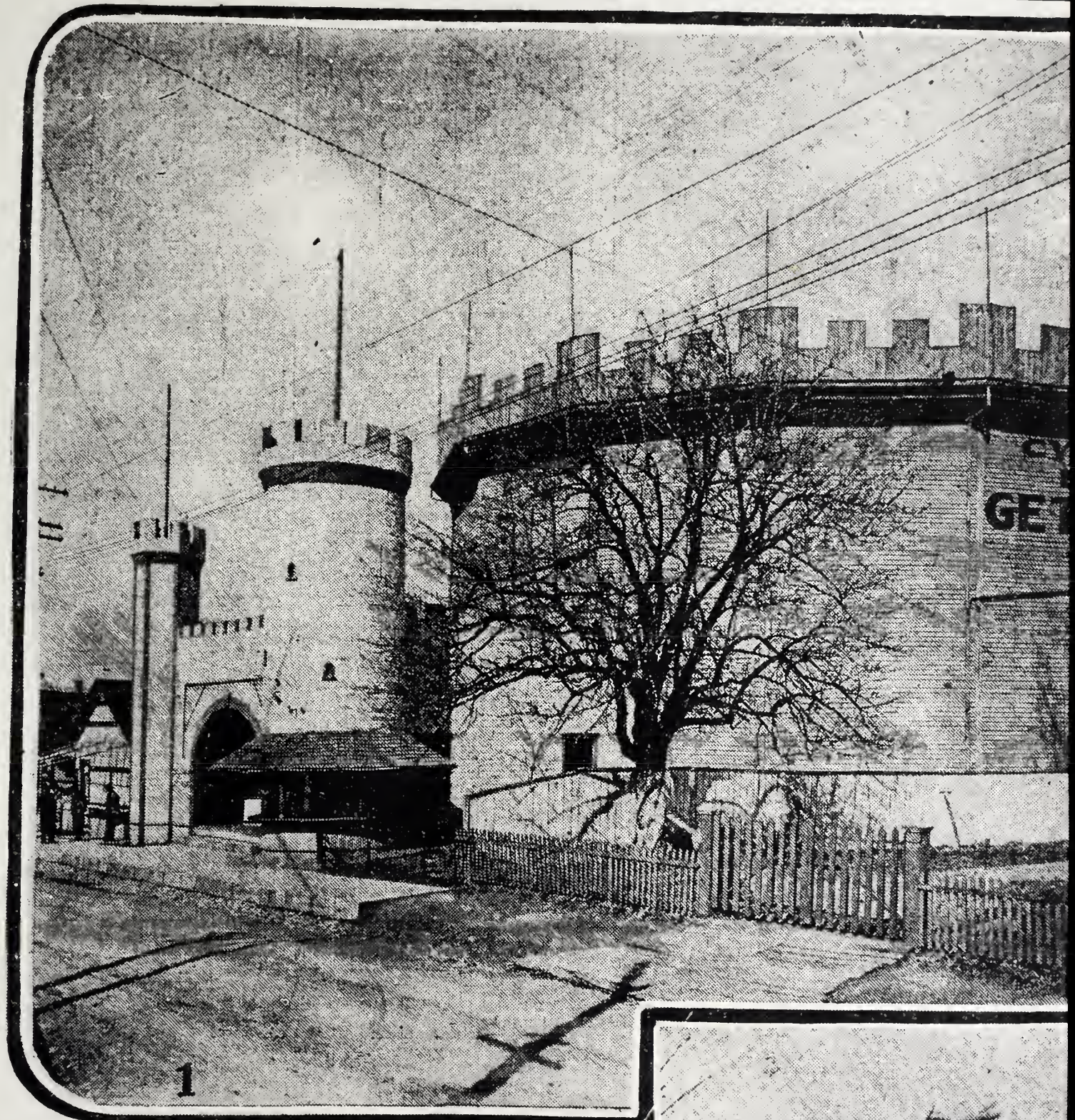
other painting is unknown.

-NPS-

Gettysburg National Military Park
97 Taneytown Road
Gettysburg, PA 17325



DAYTON POSSESSES POWER PREACHMENT ON PREPARED



(By Mabel Brown Martin.)

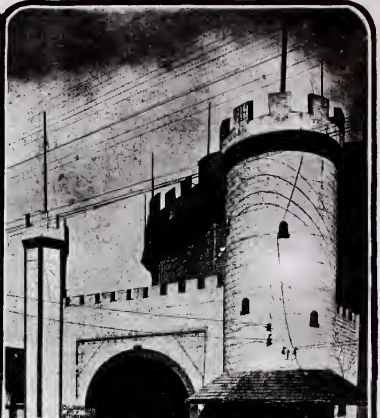
HOW long since you, Mr. and Mrs. Daytonian, have paid a visit to "The Battle of

of whose hazy distance is heightened by the scenes which claim attention between,—scenes which make the breath come faster, and the heart beat to a quickened



DAYTON POSSESSES POWERFUL PREACHMENT ON PREPAREDNESS

BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG AT LAKESIDE PRESENTS WAR
AS IT IS, IN ABSOLUTE REALISM — WORLD'S GREATEST
CYCLORAMA ANNUALLY ATTRACTS THOUSANDS.



(By Mabel Brown Martin.)

HOW long since you, Mr. and Mrs. Dextonian, have paid

a visit to "The Battle of Gettysburg," at Lakeside Park. Confess now, wasn't your last visit paid several years ago, when you were playing more or less reluctant escort to relatives or out-of-town friends, and in duty-bound, included this wonderful attraction in the hurried schedule of the day at "The Home"? You hardly were able to give it more than a glance,—perhaps you were near-cross, and your feet ached, and it is safe to say that there wasn't ample time spent for the atmosphere of this great creation to take possession of you.

But suppose now, in these big stirring days, when everyone is talking Preparedness, and when we don't see how the first pages of the *Dailies* can surpass the horrors of past chronicles,—suppose now, we say, you spend an hour in real appreciation of this greatest masterpiece of its kind to the world.

Surpassing merit must surely be conceded this printing, which was first exhibited to the public on July 3th, 1887, and which has never been closed from that day on, or moved from its original location.

It is particularly a Dayton institution, not only by reason of its 29 years of association with the Soldiers' Home, but for the fact that only a short distance beyond, in the barracks yarder, there are gray-haired men who shared the splendors and tragedies of this three-days' engagement—unquestionably the pivotal battle of the Civil War.

They often gather in the Cyclorama Building,—these veterans of shot and shell, and the chance visitor is often interested in their reminiscences.

WIDE GREAT SCOPE

After the apacious lobby has been entered, and the stairs ascended, one is suddenly ushered upon a scene embracing a happily ground of 35 square miles, the vast theater in which the events of these memorable 1st, 2nd and 3rd days of July, 1863, were staged.

The view extends to the mountains on the horizon, the effect

of whose hazy distance is heightened by the scenes which claim attention between,—scenes which make the breaths come faster, and the heart beat to a quickened note. No "Movie Thriller" ever offered dramatic events of half the heart-interest that can be traced here and there upon this great panorama or intensive section.

It is not long before a sense of

the unreality of the present, and a sympathetic understanding of these stirring events of the past creeps insensibly upon the spirit, and one unconsciously becomes a part of the great spectacle unfolded before him.

HARMONIOUS FOREGROUND.

Many are amazed at the realistic effect presented by the foreground, whose arrangement is so harmoniously blended with the picture, that it is difficult to tell where the actual trees, rail fences, and stone walls terminate, and the painted ones begin.

Here and there are the red coals of a campfire, whose charred embers seem about to quicken into a blaze. In the dust, are flung about in confusion knapsacks, canteens, saddles and guns,—these, by the way, being actual trophies of the great battle, gathered on the field of Gettysburg.

Life-sized silhouettes of men, horses, cannon and gun carriages, startlingly true to life, mingle imperceptibly with those in the picture. These effects can only be appreciated by being seen, and arouse wonder by their faithful reproduction.

REMARKABLE SCOPE

The tremendous scope of this work is impressed upon the observer by degrees, and the artistic value of the exhibition, without a peer of its kind in the world, begins to be appreciated.

Consider, if you will, that at least six months were consumed in its preparation, the *Master Artist*, Marion Knight, under whose direction it was executed, controlling a corps of artists during all of that time, some of whom had even to be placed under guard, by reason of their eccentricities, until the completion of the work.

They were all specialists, some working solely upon horses, others upon men, while still others executed the wonderful effects in

trees whose leaves seem only to
await a breeze to set them sway-
ing.

COMPOSITE EFFECT.

How, with so many wielding the brush in this master-conception, on canvases of such heroic size, the effect is one of such complete unity, has been the marvel of artists from all over the world who have stood in humility before this great work.

And there have been hundreds of these,—artists of note from all over America and countries across the sea, who have despaired of ever obtaining such delicate effects of cloud, such contrasts of light and shade, and such vigour of action as are found in this galaxy of stirring events.

There have been artists who came for weeks just to study horses, others the figures, and so it goes, men whose judgment the world has valued, have gone into ecstasies over this great painting which many Daytonians have never met even at all.

ITS SIZE

The entire cost of "The Battle of Gettysburg," which is the only cyclorama of its kind in the world, was \$30,000. It consumes 16,000 square feet of canvas, being 40 feet high, and 320 feet in circumference. One is compelled to wonder at the perfection with which the colors of 29 years ago defy Father Time. Every ounce of color in this massive production was imported from England. The total cost of the paint alone being over \$10,000.

This is the only known exam

ple of Marion Knight's work in sculpture, a similar cyclorama which he once executed in Chicago being long ago disintegrated. Many Daytonians will also recall his scene from the *Charlot Reel* in *Brasserie*, on the old Park Hotel in Dayton, which has also vanished with the flight of time.

The work is valuable from the historical, artistic and symbolical standpoint, and should be paid repeated visits during the present summer by every man, woman and child in Dayton. The suggestions to be gained from this noble canvas are many, and the time devoted to its careful study is well spent.

If ever an object lesson on Preparedness and the results of War is needed, our visit to "The Battle of Gettysburg" will convince the most skeptical of this necessity.

There are bits of description opposite the various scenes, on the visitor's hallway, which are supplemented by the lecturer-attendant, or by George C. Lautenschlager, the proprietor and manager of this splendid attraction.

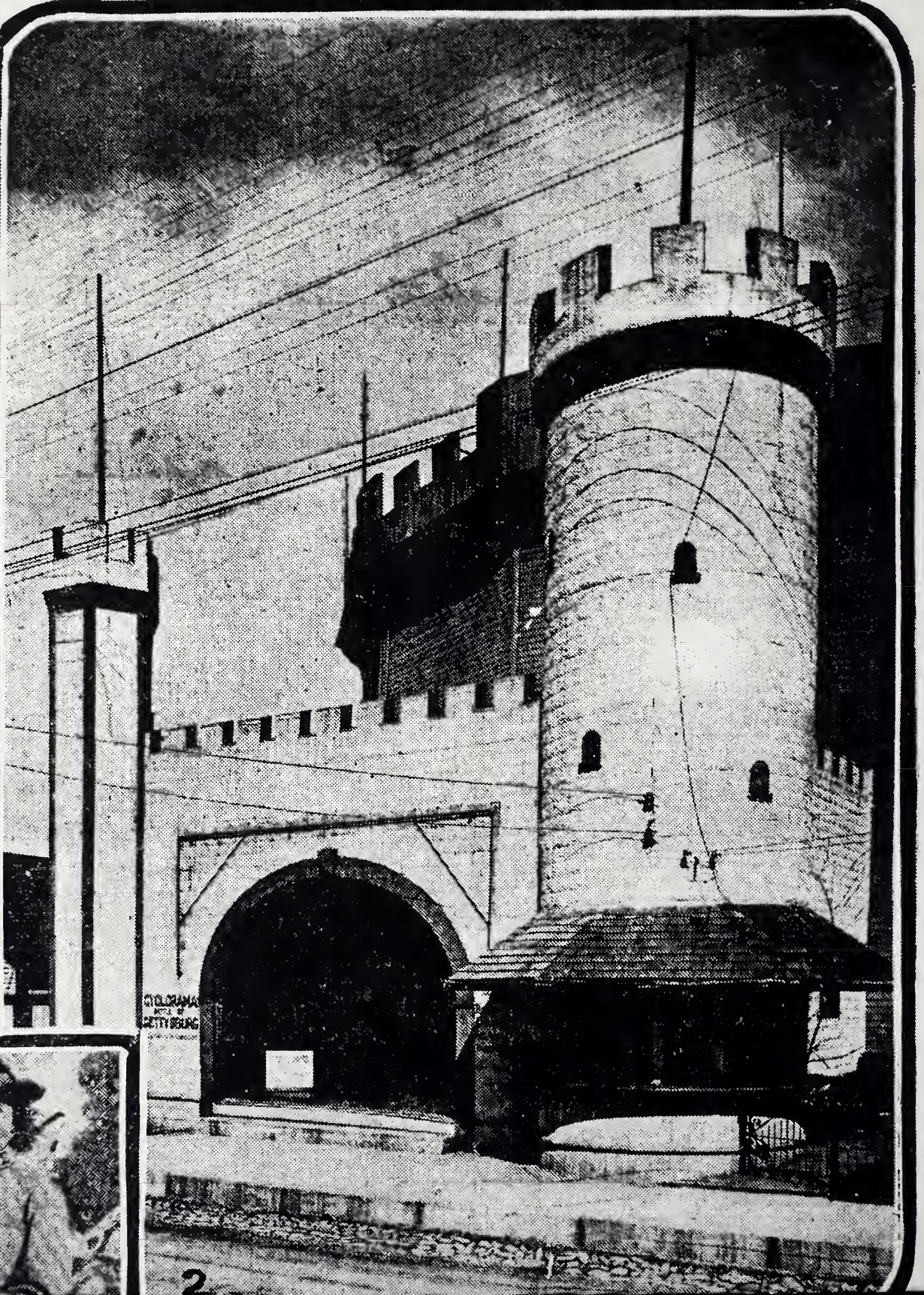
repeated trips to the Gettysburg field, and is able to add intensely interesting and dramatic incidents compiled from acquaintance with soldiers who were in the battle and extensive study. Helpful little souvenir booklets are distributed to visitors, which enable him to further understand the importance which comes from the fact that this is the place of the famous "Pickett's" battle.

No trip to the Soldiers' Home is complete without a visit to the "Battle of Gettysburg," which is conveniently situated on Gettysburg avenue, a short distance from either line of street cars.

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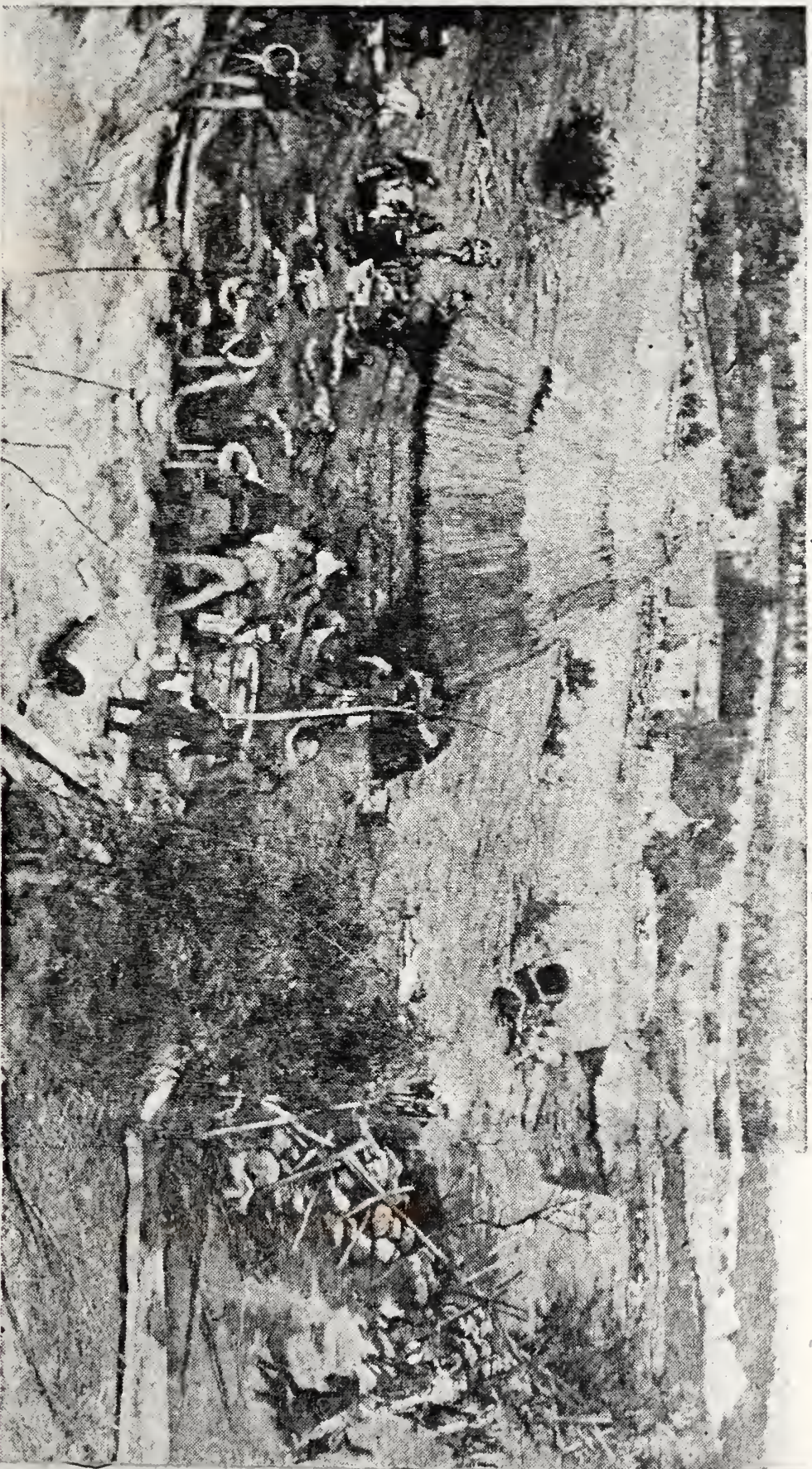
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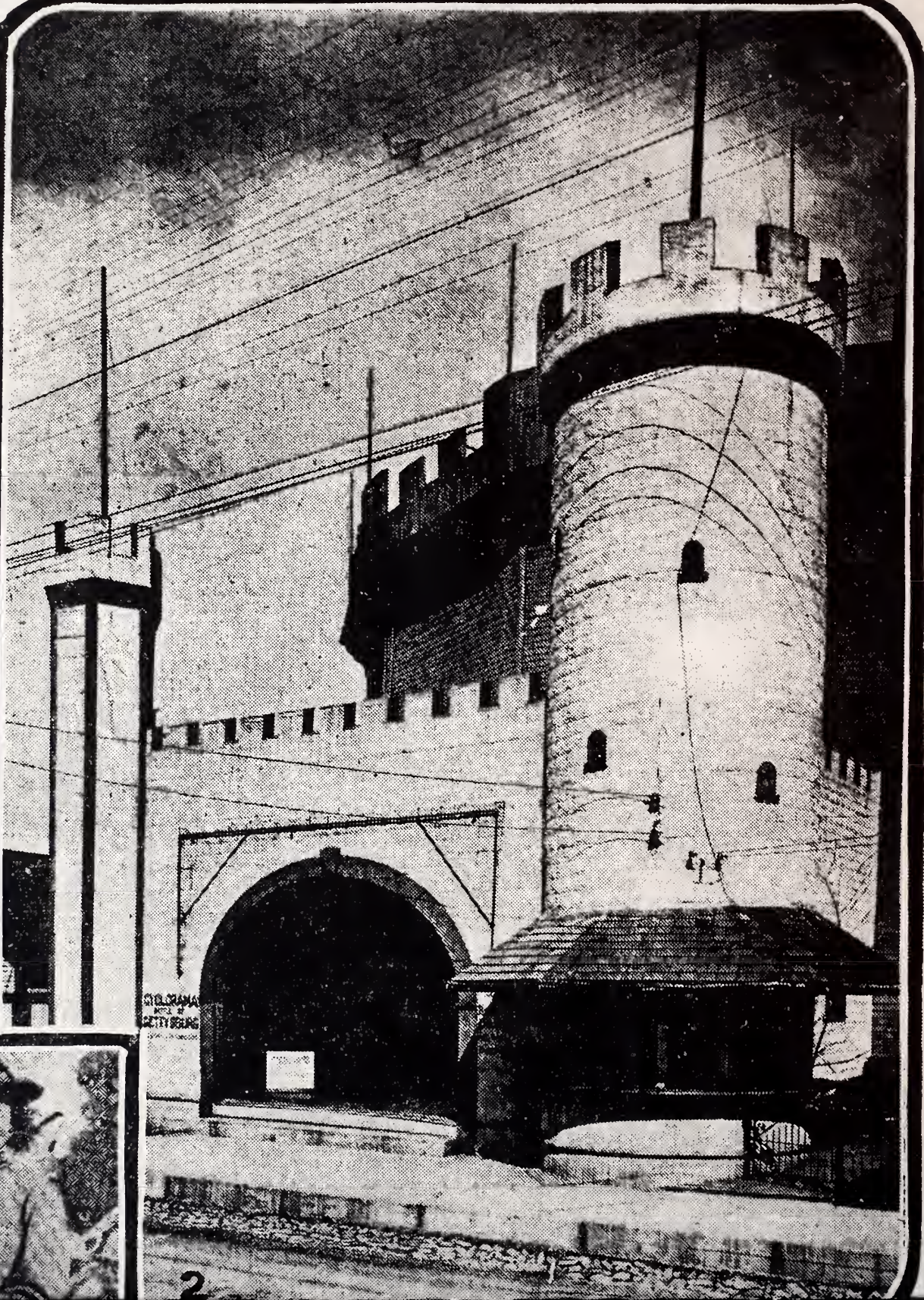
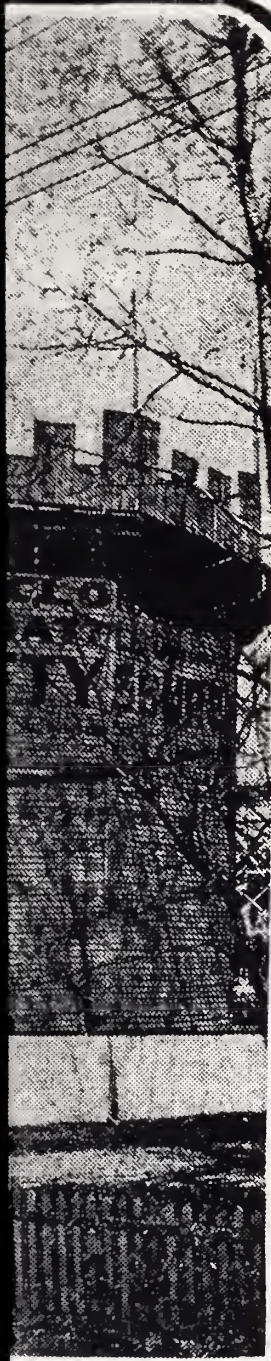
Masters of the Cyclorama

The original Cyclorama for which Gettysburg Ave. is named was painted



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The original Cyclorama for which Gettysburg Ave. is named was painted by a group of German immigrant artists who specialized in giant canvases.

Mystery of the Cyclorama

By ELLEN MOFFAT
America Staff Writer

WHAT happened to Dayton's Cyclorama? An integral part of the Civil War intrigues, many Daytonians will recall with pleasure the giant, circular canvas that turned the Battle of Gettysburg into a personal experience.

"You grabbed a picnic lunch, asked your Dad for a quarter and took a trolley to the round house near the Soldiers Home," the canvas gave Gettysburg Ave. its name. What became of it has remained a mystery to most Daytonians.

"Some day it will end up in Japan, where it became a study in military strategy."

"I saw it," claims a Dayton woman. "It is at Gettysburg." Still others insist it went up in smoke, in a warehouse fire.

In a way all three views are right. For there were at least three cycloramas of the Battle of Gettysburg, reports H. Russell Miller, 2111 Raymond Ave., who has made a lifelong study of the subject.

Even more important he claims he has the only painted replica of the Dayton engine. His claim is backed by a photograph.

THE CYCLORAMA has touched off scores of arguments. Actually, Dayton's famed canvas, Miller has found, was constructed by a man named Maximilian, George J. Johnston of Dayton. A Miller descendant, who was a friend named George Chapp and two Civil War veterans, David Lee and William Knapp, witnessed the "cyclorama" in Dayton, Ohio, sometime before 1888, for it was first shown July 1 of that year. And they started it at a time Gettysburg was alive in the minds of many throughout the country.

The company hired a group of German immigrant artists headed by a man named Ferdinand Wilhelm Meyer and assisted by Wilhelm Werner. They painted it in Germany. The artists were well paid, each one an expert. Comments on the battle, whether in school, book, story, or newspaper, are battle strategy.

The group painted the Battle of Atlanta and the Battle of Lookout Mountain as well as many painted scenes. And there is evidence they split up and some painted another cyclorama.

Battle of Gettysburg 'Personal Experience' For Viewers of Canvas

of the Battle of Gettysburg. (This was believed to have wound up in Japan where it was studied by military strategists.) The era of the cyclorama preceded the era of the movie. Everyone got into the act. One cyclorama of a Mississippi river scene, situated in St. Louis, in 1890. It seemed to give viewers the illusion they were moving.

Before the Miller group had finished its cyclorama, a French artist, Paul Philippoteaux, somehow managed to copy them. He worked from sketches and charts. He hired French models in his studio and managed to complete his Frenchified version of the battle before the Dayton-sponsored work was ready.

The Philippoteaux work "opened" in Boston, before Dayton's was seen.

"The Philippoteaux canvas smacks too much of France," Miller explained. "French flags appear in it. Instead of his name the famous French artist (who painted the Battle of Waterloo) pole himself in a corner under a tree."

ARGUMENTS still rage over who copied whom. Meanwhile a third cyclorama (later sold to Japan) made its appearance.

The Philippoteaux canvas appeared at the St. Louis Exposition and in Chicago.

Miller, who authoritatively forces the Dayton work, claims it is much more authentic than the French-made canvas.

Mrs. Henry Hunt, widow at the general, visited the St. Louis Exposition in company with Miss Elizabeth Langstaff. There is a story that she looked at the cyclorama and exclaimed loudly, "That doesn't look like the general at all. He goes away by sea. He never looked like the general's wife."

"Doubtless did," they returned again and again. They walked to the center of the round house and looked at the colored battle scene, labeled in light. A platform with white iron rails and real weapons gave a 35-foot view to the work. Military men criticized the position of the cannon until it was pointed out that the shape of the canvas put parts of the picture out of the perspective.

George Langstaff's daughter, a druggist purchased a corner seat, labeled the round house. He and his son continued the exhibit.

"Harry Langstaff's daughter helped earn his medical education here in St. Louis," Miller explained. "He first became such an expert on the battle that he was asked to do the commentary on the Philippoteaux canvas at the St. Louis Exposition."

The cyclorama finally failed to draw crowds. It changed hands several times. When Miller learned the building was to be razed, and the canvas taken away, he seemed to act.

"First I took a pencil and notebooks and gave the caretaker a diary if he would let me in. I spent days making color charts and drawings. I also hired a photographer to copy every inch of the canvas. We finished just three days before the canvas was scheduled to come down."

This was a lucky decision for Miller whose interest in history stemmed from childhood and prompted him to teach it.

He approached the wedding company head and bought out the canvas. He decided to raise some money to preserve it.

One night he heard a fire alarm and saw an orange cloud over the warehouse where he knew it had been stored. He raced to the building but found it demolished.

Miller had secured Dayton artists, including Eben Wiley, and used his work. The original had measured 211 feet in length, 31 feet in height. Miller's miniature is about 115 feet long and 15 feet high. He studied the photographs in sections, by canvas.

Occasionally Miller can be prevailed upon to lecture on his prize. He has appeared at West Point and several other places. He has been the chief attraction at many schools and is a frequent vaudeville.

The cyclorama is a part of the Miller collection of photographs, figures, books and other materials on military history and the Civil War. Miller is a member of the company of military collectors and historians.

Born in Dayton, Miller spent his early years teaching physical education. He involved himself in Dayton and at one time, when interest was at white heat, he was instrumental in bringing tournaments here.

Miller last March retired for the second time. He quit teaching to work at Wright-Patterson Air Force base for seven years.

At 58 he is entering one of the busiest times of his life. He flies to battle fields, consults experts and talks to museum curators. Several books (including one on the history of military displays) are in the works.

Daytonians may yet find, in book form, a new incarnation of their beloved Cyclorama.



Dramatic close-up of portion of big battle shows slaughter of horses as well as warriors.

By ELLEN MOFFAT
Camericia Staff Writer

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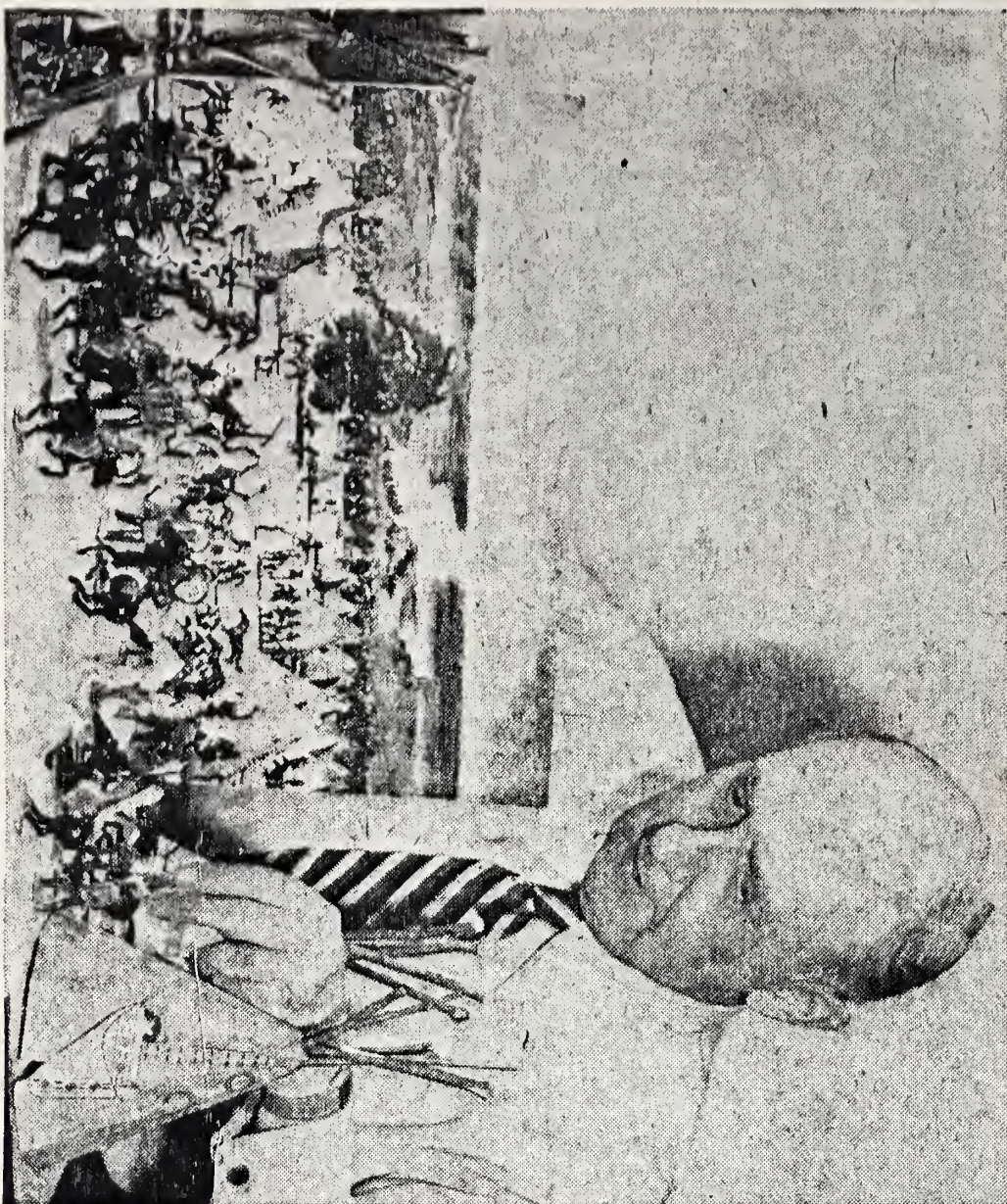
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Even more important he claims to have the only colored replica of the Dayton painting. His claim is backed by a copyright.

THE CYCLORAMA has touched off scores of arguments. Actually, Dayton's famed canvas, Miller has found, was contracted for by a man named Marion Knight, former lieutenant on Hayes' staff. A Miami countian, Knight, with a friend named George Clyde and two Civil War veterans, David Lee and William Evans, organized "Cyclorama, Inc." They planned the canvas sometime before 1888 (for it was first shown July 4 of that year). And they started it at a time Gettysburg was alive in the minds of many throughout the country.

The company hired a group of German immigrant artists headed by a man named Frederick Wilhelm Heine and directed by Wilhelm Werner. They painted it in Chicago. The artists were well organized. Each was an expert. One was a horse painter, another an action man. Others knew uniforms or battle strategy.

The group painted the Battle of Atlanta and the Battle of Lookout Mountain as well as many pastoral scenes. And there is evidence they split up and some painted another cyclorama



Hobbyist Miller's replica is part of large collection of historical items.
Custer's Last Fight from the Indian point of view.

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